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**CIRCULAR LETTER: DHCQ 09-02-507**

**TO:** Chief Executive Officers, Massachusetts Public Health Hospitals

**FROM:** Paul I. Dreyer, PhD, Director

**SUBJECT:** Healthcare Associated Infections – Public Reporting

**DATE:** February 13, 2009

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety and Medical Error Reduction (BLC) will be issuing the first public report of healthcare associated infections in Massachusetts's acute care hospitals. The data will be in the aggregate with no hospital specific information. We plan to make the report public in March, 2009. This fulfills a requirement of the Healthcare Quality and Cost Council chaired by Dr. JudyAnn Bigby, Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services who has identified transparency as a statewide improvement goal.

The Expert Panel in their final report recommended a series of measures for public reporting. The measures were chosen based on three criteria: frequency, severity and preventability. They include central venous catheter bloodstream infections (BSI) in intensive care units (ICU), surgical site infections (SSI) resulting from hip arthroplasty and surgical site infections resulting from knee arthroplasty. The data covers the period from July 1, 2008 to October 31, 2008. The starting date was specified in the hospital licensure regulation found in 105 CMR 130.1701.

We will send each hospital a copy of the report once it is released. The next public report is planned for October, 2009. It will include hospital specific data including information on the required Massachusetts expanded race and ethnicity codes.

If you have any questions, please contact: Roberta Bernstein at [roberta.bernstein@state.ma.us](mailto:roberta.bernstein@state.ma.us), 617-753-8062 or Eileen McHale at [eileen.mchale@state.ma.us](mailto:eileen.mchale@state.ma.us).